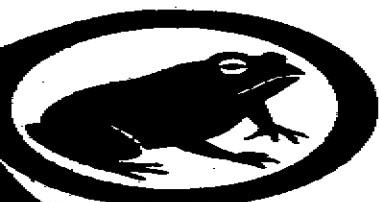


Black Frog



BLACK FROG is a Diplomacy Zine that emphasizes that Postal Diplomacy is fun to play! The publisher is John H. ('Jack') Masters, 25711 North Vista Fairways Drive, Valencia, CA 91355. Telephone (805) 259-2811.

Subscriptions to BF are 50¢ per issue, with a minimum new sub for ten issues (= \$5.00).

Diplomacy is a multi-player war game invented by Alan B. Calhamer and owned by Avalon Hill Company.

Cosmic Encounter is a multi-player science-fiction game presently being published by Eon Products, Inc.

There are no current game openings in Diplomacy at the moment. There are openings for at least eight players in Cosmic Encounter. (I have four signed up, but would like to split these into two games) There is no gamefee for Cosmic Encounter, players need only maintain a subscription to Black Frog.

EAST OF EDEN

Players in regular Diplomacy games in Black Frog will soon be receiving their adjudications in a new zine that is entitled East of Eden. The first issue of EofE, with the fall 1983 results for "Death" (1979ID), was issued on February 18th.

East of Eden is sent out free of charge to players in Black Frog games. There are no subscriptions to it and it cannot be otherwise obtained at any price.

From the start it has been a goal of Black Frog to send out game adjudications within 24 hours of the deadlines. East of Eden will ensure that I am able to do this. I now have over 80 subscribers to Black Frog and will soon have eight regular Diplomacy games in progress. Publishing EofE seems to be the best way to maintain well run games and still serve a large number of subscribers in Black Frog. All game results will be summarized in Black Frog for the benefit of any non-players who may be following them.

I would appreciate comments on this. I would also be glad to send any BF subber who sends in a stamp with a request, a sample copy of East of Eden.

18¢ Rate for First-Class Letter Voted

Here it is people, what we have all been looking forward to since the first of the year.

New rates will probably go into effect on March 12th. 18¢ is less than the 20¢ rate that the Post Office Dept was asking for, but they gained the right to go back in before the first of the next year and ask for another increase.

SCOTT HANSON DEPT:

Yeh Scott! We all know all about Minneapolis. Remember all of the times the Los Angeles Rams have gone up there and refused to play football?

... and about those 84 degree Minnesota summers. When I was in St. Paul, we always used to hope that summer would fall on a weekend--so we could go on a picnic.

Cold Shoulder

A 66-year-old man has asked a local judge to annul his marriage to a 35-year-old woman on the grounds that she doesn't like the city of Minneapolis, Minn. The groom, Albert Arbefeld, said his wife of one day left for Los Angeles and refuses to return to Minneapolis. And it was not even a bad day for Minneapolis — 84 degrees and sunny.

NEW ZINES:

EUROPA EXPRESS by Gary L. Coughlan, 4614 Martha Cole Lane, Memphis, Tennessee 38118. There have been two of these in my mail box; I assume that one is a fake but I am not sure which one. The one dedicated to Dan Kuszynski must be the fake--but I will wait and see. In it (if it is not the fake) Gary reveals that he was the perpetrator of the most despicable plot in the entire history of the postal Diplomacy hobby.

Subscriptions to Europa Express (both of them) are \$6.00 for ten issues. I highly recommend this zine,

and anticipate that everybody should find it quite worthwhile. It is going to be a bit European in flavor and will have international games and, I expect, a bit of input from European Diplomacy zines.

I am especially looking forward to seeing the 2nd issue as Gary has promised to tell us the story of why he is moving to Biloxi in April and to also let us know what a "chicken-fried" steak is.

I hope that publication of Europa Express will not interfere with Gary's other publication efforts and that he will continue to bring us Y'All.

Donovan (...er, Gary, sorry) is very well equipped to publish. He has installed his own Xerox machine in his spare bedroom and has one hell of a fancy typewriter. He just loves to plow out lines of fancy Greek letters with his typewriter. This is important to remember because, if you are having any trouble telling the real Europa Express from fake issues--look for rows of Greek letters. Like these below:

ΦΦΦΧΧΧΨΨΨΩΩΞΞooooooooooooooo

Remember, only Gary has the capability of typing stuff like this. So if you run across letters like this, you will know that you either have a genuine copy of Europa Express; or a fake (if it is some zine other than EE) that has been put out by Gary Coughlan.

THE WHITE DUKE by Steve Shaddix, 5486 Butano Way, Rocklin, CA 95677. Game openings are offered in Diplomacy, Origins of World War II and Afrika Korps. The initial issue is well formatted and looks good. It is apparently a joint effort of six persons (High School students?). The one game start would appear to be a local game. It is difficult for me to recommend this on the basis of one issue from a publisher that I am completely unfamiliar with in the hobby. New zines need to be supported by the hobby, but I would suggest that you wait to see two or three issues of this one before starting a game.

DOT HAPPY by Allen Wells. Not a zine yet, but look for it by June of this year. It is going to be a very very good one. Allen has taken over the "Twilight Zine" from Al Rodriguez and will conclude those games in his zine. I am predicting that he will expand and open up new games in June.

CORRIGENDUM

Two errors occurred in the GOLDEN FROG awards in issue #35, and these should be corrected.

Section 4 (Citation #11) should be corrected from Andy Lischett to John Michalski. It was actually John who was responsible for the fake of Egg Nog. Michael Mills credited it to Andy Lischett and seemed to know what he was talking about. However credit should go to John Michalski.

Section 5(Citation #27) should go to Al Rodriguez and not Dan Kuszynski. This is for the creation of Vacation Diplomacy. It was Al and not Dan that created this variant, although Dan started the first postal game in Big Timer.

HOBBY MASCOT

Yes, there is going to be an election for hobby mascot. Mike Conner of Lone Star Diplomat is going to moderate. I trust that all Black Froggers will send a postcard to Mike with their votes--and that most of them will vote for Brux.

Bob Martin, oddsmaker for the Union Plaza in Las Vegas, has provided these odds on the 21 official candidates.

{ 1. }	Rod Walker's cat "Pussy Galore"	20-1
{ 2. }	Bruce Linsey's dog "Trouble".....	5-1
{ 3. }	"Kathy Byrne"	9-2
{ 4. }	Kathy Byrne's pet Italian deer "Bloodsucker"	15-1
{ 5. }	"The extinct Moa"	500-1
{ 6. }	"The Great White Shark".....	75-1
{ 7. }	"Johnnie the Gnome".....	15-1
{ 8. }	Mike Conner's cat "Caruso"	30-1
{ 9. }	Robert Sack's "Pet Rock".....	1000-1
{ 10. }	Jane Proskin's pet Orangutan "Black Jack".	9-2
{ 11. }	Jack Master's mean mutt, "Brux"!.....	7-2
{ 12. }	"Masters", a flea	100-1
{ 13. }	Tom Mainardi's female beta "Kathy".....	150-1
{ 14. }	"the Dire-Berch".....	500-1
{ 15. }	Mark Larzelere's tree, "Birch".....	400-1
{ 16. }	The Chameleon	200-1
{ 17. }	The Unknown Dipper from the Planet EO"....	9000-1
{ 18. }	Gary Coughlan's civit cat, "Lepanto"	25-1
{ 19. }	Dave Carter's Canadian Honker, "Calhamer".	25-1

vote for
BRUX
as
Hobby Mascot

.....

Mike Conner (Lone Star Diplomat) is conducting a poll to elect a hobby mascot for the postal Diplomacy hobby. To vote in this poll you must send in your vote, before March 24, 1981 to Mike at:

Mike Conner
3214 Beverly Road
Austin, TX 78703

Please note that your vote must be sent on a postcard to be counted.

In the fifth issue of LSD (February 2nd, 1981) Mike identified 21 candidates for "hobby mascot." Most important of these is my dog Brux (Mike identified him as Bruce in LSD--but that is not his name). Mike places Brux as candidate #11 on his list, but this is not correct either. He should have been candidate #4 as only three other candidates were proposed prior to September 1980 when Brux was proposed in Black Frog (issue #13).

Do yourself and the hobby a good turn then and vote for Brux for hobby mascot. After all if you are crazy enough to play postal Diplomacy, you are probably crazy enough to take a "hobby mascot" vote as important. Brux is the important candidate. Be sure and vote! Don't let one of those other weird and non-descript candidates be elected. Do you want to have to tell your friends that you are part of a hobby where a "Birch Tree" or a "dog that licks dirty feet" has been elected hobby mascot? Of course you don't! So make sure this doesn't happen. Vote! And, vote for Brux!

The following $2\frac{1}{2}$ pages are the original description of Brux and his qualifications for hobby mascot which has been copied directly out of Black Frog #14.

BRUX'S QUALIFICATIONS

I believe my dog Brux has considerably better qualifications for being hobby mascot. In the first place, he has all the charm and grace of the typical Diplomacy player--he bites people.

But, let me tell you a bit about him.....

I live in a condominium (no place for a dog to start with) with my wife Ardyce and sons Kevin (14) and David (12). While I was off on a weekend trip, about ten months ago, Kevin bought Brux from a school friend for 75¢. Thus Brux is really Kevin's dog and not mine. In fact Brux never has quite accepted me as being one of the family. (There is a slight advantage to being one of the family, for Brux doesn't bite members of the family as often as strangers.)

Brux is a big, wire-haired, ugly mutt; we have never been able to figure out what breeds he might be derived from. When I first saw the dog, the kids asked me what they should call him. I took one look at him and said Brux. The name has stuck even though the kid who sold him to Kevin had called him Flash.

Through the months, Brux has bit all the members of the family at least a couple of times. We have tried everything to get on his good side, but nothing seems to work. We have tried taking turns feeding him to stay on his good side, but even after a meal Brux is irritable and has no reservations against biting the hand that fed him.

David (who is nearly scared to death of Brux) has a particularly hard time getting along with him. One morning David came down to breakfast and found that Brux had chewed up his homework. Without thinking David hit Brux in the face with a cantaloupe and then jumped up on the dining room table, scattering dishes and silverware and spilling grape juice. Brux's first free leap carried him all the way across the table and into a book case. He was slowed down for a moment as books tumbled all

over him. He was back on his feet in a minute and in the end caught David and gave him a pretty vicious bite in the leg. Then it was all over. He never bites anybody more than once. Kevin always mentions this as a point in his favor; he claims that Brux has a quick temper but never holds a grudge. Kevin is always defending him.

All of the neighbors hate Brux and one or two people have tried to poison him. He has acted poisoned on several occasions, but always recovers. Lots of people have reported Brux to the police. However, the local Chief of Police has a daughter who plays volleyball on the wife's highschool team and we have had no really serious problem yet. Even so the cops have been out a couple of times. They suggest that we tie Brux up but Kevin is forever turning him loose. He claims that it is always the fault of the people who are bitten and not Brux. "When he starts for them, they scream," he explains, "and that excites him."

Brux at his meals is an unusual sight. Because of the fact that if you reach toward the floor he will bite you, we usually put his food on top of the table. Brux then stands on a bench and eats off the table top. One time when the kids uncle Rick visited us, he was splutteringly indignant when he found we fed the dog on a table top. A Viet Nam vet who always boasted of having been the third man up Karnassa Ridge, Rick is not afraid of much. Rick said he was not afraid of any dog that lived and that he would put the dogs plate on the floor if we would give it to him. I told him if he had fed Brux on the floor just before the battle, he would have certainly been the first man up Karnassa Ridge. Uncle Rick was furious, "Bring the SOB in," he shouted. "I'll feed him on the floor." I avoided a messy situation by telling him that Brux had already been fed and wasn't hungry.

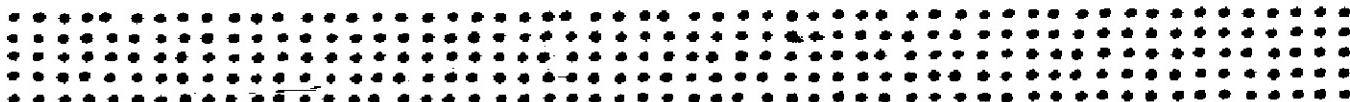
One morning two weeks ago, Brux bit me slightly, more or less in passing. I reached down and grabbed his short stumpy tail and hoisted him into the air. I was very foolish. As long as I held Brux off the floor by his tail he couldn't get at me, but he was twisting and jerking, snarling all the time, and I realized that I couldn't hold him this way for very long. I carried him to the patio door, tossed him out and then quickly shut the door. Next I ran and shut the back door, just getting there in time as Brux had already circled the house.

I was relieved at first, thinking I had Brux trapped outside the house; but I soon realized that he had me trapped inside.

The next day, I clumb through the crawl-space in the attic down into a neighbors condo three doors down and then snuck out into my car and off to work. It has been two weeks now and I have been living in a motel not wanting to go home and face the music. Ardyce comes down a couple of times a week, bringing the mail and dinner, so it is not impossible for me to stay on like this, but I will have to give in sooner or later.

Now, who do you want for the hobby mascot? Trouble, a dog who licks dirty feet or Brux a dog that can run you out of your own home?

VOTE FOR BRUX!



That my friend is the story of Brux, whom I am hoping will become the next hobby mascot. There have been illustrations or photographs of almost all of the other candidates. (See LSD #5 for a review of these.) Unfortunately Brux, not only takes a dislike to people pointing cameras at him, but has learned to eat cameras. For this reason it has been quite impossible to supply a photo of the dog.

There is a possibility, albeit remote, that Brux may not be elected hobby mascot. If he isn't, then there is no redeeming feature about him and he has a date with the dog pound.

A handwritten signature in cursive ink that reads "Jack Masters". The signature is fluid and expressive, with varying line thicknesses.

Hobby Mascots Continued from page 4

- {20.) "The Platonic Ideal Rectangular Cube" 500-1
(21.) Mark Lew's "non-mascot"..... 9999-1

THE FRESHMAN CLASS POLL

Glenn Overby (Jihad!) recently conducted a rating poll of "the Freshman Class" zine (e.g. zines that were started in 1980. The results were published in Jihad! #10 for February 1981. Eighteen persons voted and no publishers vote was counted for his own zine. The results were as follows:

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name of Zine</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>1sts</u>	<u>Average</u>
1.	JIHAD!	12	6	8.24
2.	BLACK FROG	10	5	8.20
3.	PLAQUE TIMES	12	2	7.66
4.	LONE STAR DIPLOMAT	14	8	7.57
5.	JUST AMONG FRIENDS	9	-	6.78
6.	LIFE OF MONTY	9	-	6.50
7.	TORPEDO	9	-	6.32
8.	APPALLING GREED	10	2	5.70
9.	INVASION	10	1	5.65
10.	BORN TO DIP	7	-	5.29
11.	PROSPECTUS	3	-	4.33
12.	MIKE'S MAG	4	-	3.75

Comments: Compared to the Leeder Zine Poll for 1980, the scores given these "freshman" zines are quite high. The fact that only 18 persons voted is a bit of a disappointment, but at least these 18 persons have a positive opinion towards the hobby at the moment.

The high ratings of Lone Star Diplomat, Black Frog, and Jihad! were not surprising to me. I don't think that there is much question but what these three have established themselves among the top zines in the hobby. (Lone Star Diplomat would have ranked higher if it weren't for a couple of "negative" votes that brought it's average down. At the time the poll was conducted, only two issues of Plague Times had been published. It was rather surprising to me to see it not only receive more votes than Black Frog, but more higher votes. I believe it will take a few more issues for PT to justify this rating.

The next five zines in the poll all received a certain amount of strong support. Appalling Greed, Invasion and (to a lesser extent) Life of Monty suffered a bit from negative votes effecting their averages. With Appalling Greed in particular it is easy to see how this might be as I was rather turned off by the first issue that I received, but have since grown considerably more fond of it. In any case, I think we have nine very strong zines coming out new in 1980 and that the state of the hobby is very good.

For the complete poll results and Overby's detailed analysis, etc. write to Glenn Overby II, 23096 Tawas, Hazel Park, MI 48030. Send him some stamps and ask for a sample copy of Jihad! #10.

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JIHAD! FAKE CONTEST

Speaking of Jihad!, publisher Glenn Overby has instigated a JIHAD Fake Contest. He believes that Jihad!, Envoy and Lone Star Diplomat would be difficult to fake well. Therefor he issues a challenge, fake any of these zines, send three copies to Glenn AND verification of the person responsible for said fakes and win a two years sub to Jihad!

Well Glenn, your challenge is food for thought and is interesting, but I don't think you are going to get any takers. You didn't really allow enough time and as for the incentive....well the challenge is an incentive, but not the prize. A two years sub to Jihad! is worth \$18.00 (if you are not already getting it by trade). Contrary to popular opinion, preparing and mailing a fake zine is an expensive proposition. Neither Lone Star Diplomat or Jihad! would be difficult to fake (unless by difficult you mean expensive). Oh yes, they would be expensive. A recent Murd'ring Ministers fake cost \$70.00 to publish and mail. Lone Star Diplomat would be easier to do than MM, but considerably more expensive. I would estimate it at about \$300.00 for a one-shot deal.

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SOURCE OF THE NILE, ANYBODY?

Don Del Grande (Life of Monty) Priestly Hall #208, 2400 Durant Ave., Berkeley, CA 94720, has asked me to

plug his game openings in SOURCE OF THE NILE. The game will be a continuing campaign and will accept any number of players. I may try this one myself. I bought a copy of the game several years ago. The game has an extraordinarily good concept, but I found it very time-consuming and tedious to play. It might actually work out better by mail.

Speaking of Life of Monty, if you haven't seen it lately, it has a new look. Del Grande has gone to a digest format with photo-reduced pages. The latest issue looks good, and as a side result he is able to reduce his prices from 55¢ per copy to 45¢

o.k. Don, there is your plug for Source of the Nile, now how about plugging my openings in Cosmic Encounter? And by the way, yes I did accept Jane Proskin's challenge and designated PEEK as issue #32 of Black Frog. That one was no problem, it is issue #33 that you haven't figured out yet. I sometimes wonder, Don, if you are really all that naive as you make out or whether you are always putting me on.

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A NEW LOOK FOR JUST AMONG FRIENDS

Al Pearson's Just Among Friends is another zine with a new look. Al has abandoned his spirit duplicator and has gone to xeroxing. Result: JAF can now be read! Fantastic improvement! Just kidding Al, I could always read your zine. The thing is, every since I got my first copy of it, I have kind of gotten this annoying squint. Maybe, it will go away now.

Back in issue #19 of Black Frog (October 15th, 1980) I published a list of things to look for in future issues of Black Frog. My number 10 on this list was the "Diplomacy Player's book of List's". Pearson has independently came up with the same idea and is, with my blessing, going to publish the "Book" in JAF.

To check out JAF, write Al Pearson, Route 1, Box 177B5, Kearneysville, WV 25430. When and if you write him, please tell him to quit spreading all of those nasty rumors about Jane Proskin, however.

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And by the seventh day God completed His work which He had done. Thus the heavens and the earth, including all their hosts and Europe were completed. And on the seventh day He rested and played Diplomacy. GENESIS 2(2).

BRAD WILSON DEPT.

The following letter was received from Steve Simon
410 O Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20024:

Dear Jack,

The only important fact omitted by you and Brad Wilson is the account of how the Mason-Dixon Line screwed the State of Maryland. As a Marylander of many years and a "product" of the Maryland public school system (where I learned, among other things, the words to "Maryland, My Maryland," sung to the tune of "O' Tannenbaum"), I can state seriously that the Mason-Dixon line robbed Maryland of much territory that rightfully belonged to it. The true demarcation line should have been somewhat north of the city of Philadelphia. This is the truth, and Marylanders today still resent it. How ironic, then, to think that if the Mason-Dixon line had been drawn in the right place, Brad's own home town of Paoli, PA, would have been south of it; and Brad himself would be (shudder) a Southerner!

Sincerely,

Steve

((Thanks for your input Steve. Brad Wilson a southerner? Shudder is a mild term for my reaction. It is very true that a lot of the history that you learn in public schools is predicated upon where you are going to school. In the Kansas City, Missouri school system I learned the words to the "Missouri Waltz" and quite a bit about the local history of western Missouri (the Kansas border war, Westport, the Pony Express, Oregon and Sante Fe Trails, etc.) but precious little about Maryland and Pennsylvania. Because Maryland and Pennsylvania are original states and colonies before the revolution--I suspect that the average student in Missouri knows 20 times as much about the history of Pennsylvania or Maryland, however than the average student in Pennsylvania knows about the history of Missouri.))

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